

Why Good Work Works

Values, Obstacles and Bridges

DAY AT A GLANCE

- 9:30 Coffee – Main Floor
- 10:00 **Welcome/Introduction** – Auditorium
- 10:20 Morning panel and discussion – **Values, Obstacles and Bridges** – Auditorium
- 12:15 **Lunch** – 6th Floor
- 1:30 Panel or Workshop**
- 2:45 Panel** or Workshop

**Panel Presentations and Discussions 1:30 or 2:45:

IEPs and the Arts – Auditorium – 1:30, repeated 2:45

Related Service Providers and the Arts – Public Programming Rm, 6th Flr – 1:30 & 2:45

**Hands-on Workshops 1:30 or 2:45:

One Art Activity, Three Populations – Art Studio, 6th Floor – 1:30, repeated 2:45

Theatre: Body Language as Self-expression – Classroom, 6th Floor – 1:30, repeated 2:45

**When you registered you were asked to choose one panel and one workshop. Please attend the panel and workshop that you registered for. This will ensure adequate attendance and ample space.

- 4:00 **Next Steps/Convening** – Auditorium

Why Good Work Works

Values, Obstacles and Bridges

Guiding Questions

Our primary purpose is to deepen understanding of and practice regarding arts education provided to students on the special needs spectrum. During the course of the day, please consider the following questions for each of the sessions you attend. Your responses will be a valuable resource during our final conversation this afternoon and as you move ahead after this conference has ended.

What can you/need you do next . . .

To better help others understand the values of arts education for your special needs students?

To insure the work is fully and appropriately partnered and/or supported?

To implement tools and strategies learned in this session?

What do you need to make this happen?

Who do you need it from?

Values, Obstacles and Bridges – A Panel and Audience Discussion

A 2008 needs assessment of arts education provided special needs students in NYC public schools found that arts values are not sufficiently known by or shared between key constituencies.* In this five-part facilitated conversation distinguished panelists from multiple constituencies will discuss Values, Obstacles and Bridges with each other and the audience.

Panelists:

Gloria Colchamiro has been fascinated by the written word since reading her first book. This manifested in young adulthood with a BS in Business Administration from SUNY at Buffalo, leading to a lucrative advertising career in New York City wherein the principles of language and mass communication coalesced. On a whim, Gloria took a course in American Sign Language, which began her involvement with the Deaf community in an academic setting. It was here that her true calling beckoned and at midlife, she received a Master's Degree from Teachers College at Columbia University with her studies focused on language acquisition, how language delay affected learning and cognition in children, and how to develop effective methodologies of instruction.

Gloria is a certified Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. She has taught English in self-contained classes in the public high school setting and since her first year of teaching, has helped Deaf students with significant English language deficits pass the NYS English Regents Exam. After a decade of working with older students, she left the classroom to travel to various schools in the South Bronx serving as a Related Service Provider for Hearing Education Services, in D75 of the DOE.

Whether Deaf or hearing, placement in General Education or Special Education, Gloria is convinced truncated knowledge can only be addressed when there's a word to hang a concept on. When it's made visible through art, it's made memorable, too.

Jesse Hathaway, a former Art Teacher at a residential facility for emotionally disturbed boys, is Program Manager and Special Education Coordinator for Young Audiences New York (YANY), where he oversees Special Education programming and leads special education Professional Development for YANY TA's.

Mollie Welsh Kruger, currently at P.S. 46 in Manhattan, has been teaching second grade in the NYC Public Schools for eighteen years. In her passion to learn more about teaching, Mollie studied at Teachers College for her doctorate. Beginning with research for her dissertation, she has focused on reaching all students through differentiation and the recognition of students 'funds of knowledge.' Mollie has presented aspects of her research at conferences for the National Council of the Teachers of English and NCTEAR. For the past six years, Mollie has taught prospective and novice teachers, currently doing so at The City College of New York. She enjoys impacting other educators and their understandings of not only curriculum and planning, but – more importantly – instructional strategies and their perceptions of the students they serve. Mollie has had a long-standing commitment to Arts education in her own classroom. She regularly plays guitar and teaches her students to appreciate all types of music. She has participated in a variety of Arts programs offered through her school. For the

**Making Room At the Table*, a needs assessment conducted under the auspices of VSA arts.



last four years, Mollie has been a partner in the Bright Light Program through Young Audiences New York. Because of her close collaboration with talented teaching artists, her students have been exposed to both visual arts and dance in ways that integrated literacy and social studies and provided broader and more creative ways for students to access the curriculum.

Jo Anna Padula, MS OTR/L, is an occupational therapist (OT), at PS371K, District 75 where she works with 14-17 year old ASD and MR students. She is an avid lover of the arts, having participated in numerous musical productions from the stage of her high school musicals all the way to Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall. Jo Anna's involvement in the arts helped to ignite her passion for life and people. As an OT she focuses on helping individuals habilitate, rehabilitate and/or adapt to have meaningful and purposeful outcomes. She utilizes the arts each day, as she feels they create endless possibilities to foster and enhance all life skills.

Amy Duggins Pender is a consultant and educator and the co-founder of SmART Strategies, a firm that specializes in helping learning communities find arts-based solutions to their challenges. She served for a decade as the Director of Arts in Education and the Empire State Partnerships at the New York State Council on the Arts, where she managed nearly \$5 million in annual grants and developed a statewide professional development and community-building network. She is a classically trained singer and pianist and is currently completing her dissertation in fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in voice at the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music. She is also the parent of a special needs child.

Jennifer Raine, D.M.A., has created and implemented music and theater programs in public schools since 1995. As Special Program Coordinator for the Manhattan New Music Project, she designed Communication and Socialization through the Arts (CASTA), which provides professional development to teachers working with students on the autism spectrum. Dr. Raine currently spearheads curriculum development and professional development workshops for CASTA and for other MNMP initiatives, including Blank Page to Stage and Setting the Stage for Success, which target English Language Learners and students with special needs. From 2002-2008, Dr. Raine served as the Head of Curriculum Development for MNMP's professional development partnerships with District 75. Since 1999, she has worked as a teaching artist for numerous organizations, including Marquis Studios, the Metropolitan Opera Guild, Midori and Friends, and Young Audiences NY. In addition to her extensive work within the New York City public school system, Dr. Raine conducts student and staff development workshops throughout North America and the world, both independently and as a staff member of the Metropolitan Opera Guild Education Department and the International Schools Theater Association. Workshops focus on facilitating creation of original student work across all arts disciplines, specifically drama, music, movement, visual arts and creative writing. Dr. Raine has worked with special education populations since 1999.

Ronnie Shuster, a former paraprofessional & classroom teacher, is principal of P94M, a K-8, public school serving students with autism, emotional disturbance and mental retardation. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Early Childhood and Elementary Education, a Master of Science in Special Education and a Professional Certificate in Supervision and Administration. She has spent her entire career in the field of special education. Ronnie firmly believes that her students should be viewed as special and not just special education. She is dedicated to developing a school that looks at every

child individually and taps into "that one special thing" that drives their interest and helps them to understand that they can learn and be productive. She has a strong belief that all children can find this in the visual or performing arts. Dedicated to the arts for her pupils, her site – the only all special education school in NYC to receive a Shubert/Music Theater International Broadway Juniors Grant – is completely immersed in the work, ensuring that every child is involved in both visual & performing arts. Following this vision, Ronnie has worked with her school to develop a mission where every student, through academic rigor infused with the visual and performing arts will become a productive member of their community.

Meryl Wittenberg is an Arts Specialist in the Visual Arts, with New York State certification in Art Education and Special Education from Queens College and Adelphi University, respectively. She has worked for the New York City Department of Education at P.S.177Q, for the past 19 years. The school is a District 75, self-contained program, located in Fresh Meadows. The population that Meryl works with includes students on the autism spectrum, those with significant cognitive delays and emotional difficulties. They range in age from 5-21 years old. While engaged in art activities, her pupils encounter many everyday situations that require critical thinking and problem solving. Since art is a naturally motivating experience, her students have increased attention and self-esteem. This environment offers an opportunity for her pupils to learn many important skills that can be generalized into their everyday lives.

Facilitator:

Stephen Yaffe is an arts and education consultant and former professor. His work has appeared in *Educational Leadership* and has been featured in *Instructor Magazine* as well as *Horace*, a publication of the national school reform project, The Coalition of Essential Schools. He served as consultant to the Howard Heinz Endowment (evaluation of the Pittsburgh Fund for Arts Education), conducted a needs assessment of the New York State Council on the Arts' Arts-In-Education Program, and in 2008, completed a needs assessment of special needs students and the arts in New York City public schools, K-12, under the auspices of VSA arts. His professional development work has been praised by the Director of Education Programs for the Corporation of Public Broadcasting as being, "brave, visionary, smart". He mentors disabled teaching artists across the country, both as the VSA arts Teaching Artist Fellows coach and as coach for the VSA arts Community of Practice program. He is Co-chair of The Arts in Special Education Consortium, and welcomes you all to today's conference.

Theater Workshop: Body Language as Self-expression

Theater is a powerful tool that helps children of all abilities strengthen communication, attention and collaboration skills. Workshop participants will explore body language activities to convey intended meaning and explore ways to use such activities to work with students in three populations – Emotional Disturbance, Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Autism Spectrum. Through hands-on engagement and group discussion, participants will experience the value of theater as a kinesthetic method for improving concentration and articulating self-expression.

Workshop Presenter:

Tessa L. Derfner teaches theater, dance and literacy to children with Autism at P94M on Manhattan's Lower East Side. In 2007, Tessa worked with her Principal, Ronnie Shuster, to obtain the competitive Shubert Foundation/Music Theater International *Broadway, Jr.* grant given annually to select NYC middle schools to launch performing arts programs. P94M became the first District 75, all Special Education school to receive the prestigious award. In the program's first year, Tessa directed twenty Emotionally Disturbed students and three children with Autism in a full production of "Annie, Jr.", an excerpt of which was also performed for incoming NYC Teaching Fellows at Lincoln Center. The next year, Tessa directed "Willy Wonka, Jr.", incorporating more students with Autism and working with fellow staff member Jason Foreman to integrate a video component into the live performance. Tessa is currently mounting a production of "HONK!, Jr." – an adaptation of "The Ugly Duckling" – featuring forty students with Autism. To meet the specific performing needs of her pupils, she is collaborating again with her colleague, helping students create live action video and animation. Half of the scenes in this year's play will be presented via film. Before teaching, Tessa worked in professional performing arts as a theater producer, director and playwright (Soho Rep, Spoleto USA, Ensemble Studio Theatre, HERE). In addition to her artistic side, she worked in arts administration as an artist's manager, booking agent, tour manager and as the Company Manager for Lincoln Center Festival and the Henson International Festival of Puppet Theatre.

One Art Activity, Three Populations

This hands-on visual art workshop will demonstrate adaptations of a group art activity for three populations: autism spectrum disorder, visual impairment and emotional disturbance. Common learning objectives will underlie the adaptations for the three populations. Participants will use colored masking tape on a large working surface. Discussion among all participants will be ongoing as discoveries and reflections emerge.

Erica Rooney is a licensed Creative Arts Therapist and a Teaching Artist. For many years she was a scientific illustrator, and currently paints and writes, primarily poetry. She teaches topics in Art Therapy at CUNY-Queensborough. She has volunteered in the public schools, using literary arts in a cross-curriculum model with elementary school classes. She has been a Teaching Artist since 1999; her interest is special education populations, with focus on children on the autism spectrum. Since 2006, she has been working with Marquis Studios doing classroom residencies and PD workshops, primarily in District 75. She is currently involved in two ongoing initiatives with Marquis Studios and Manhattan New Music Project that train teaching artists and classroom teachers in adapting the arts to autism spectrum populations. She is a charter member of the Steering Committee of The Arts in Special Education Consortium. Her work in classrooms is always multi-modal, since her background includes music, dance and yoga, as well as an abiding stake in poetry and chant. Erica has an MFA in poetry from Cornell University and an MPS in Creative Arts Therapy from Pratt Institute.



IEPs and the Arts – Moderated Panel Presentation and Discussion

A look at the Individualized Education Plan (IEP), required for each student in special education, and how the arts fit into the plan, or vice versa. We will look at what an IEP is, who develops it, carries it out, assesses success. A panel will share their experiences of incorporating the arts into the IEP, using the IEP to guide curriculum, and overall practices and policies. Sharing from those in attendance will be encouraged.

Panelists:

Kathleen Dowd Ciric is a native New Yorker who has worked in the Department of Education for over 30 years. She holds a Masters of Science in Special Education and a Professional Diploma in School Administration and Supervision. She is currently a School Wide Coordinator for P94M, a District 75 school in New York City, which services students with autism, mental retardation and emotional handicaps. Over the years she has participated in various District and school based initiatives and grants relating to curriculum, the arts, parent involvement, and behavior management. She began her career as a classroom teacher for students with special needs and for the last 15 years she has worked as a Site Coordinator and most recently as a School Wide Coordinator. Her responsibilities include, coordinating a site of 7 classes of children with autism, staff development on IEPs, school wide coordination of related services and managing day-to-day administrative matters.

Gale V. Graham, or Ms. Graham, to her students, is a mom and has been a special education teacher for over 25 years. She has a Master's Degree in Special Education as well as one in Administration and Supervision. Ms. Graham has worked with special needs children ranging in ages from 18 months to young adults and has endured and implemented IEP's for as long as she can remember. Ms. Graham's current classroom is in The Jewish Home and Hospital, an off-site of P721X in District 75. Her students, ages 17-21, are classified with MR, autism and behavioral problems. They volunteer at the hospital where they assist residents/staff while enhancing their vocational and social skills. Ms. Graham is past president of the School Leadership Team and is an active member of its Vocational Assessment Rubrics Team. An advocate for students and parents alike, she has ongoing communication with them and regards this as a key factor in the success of the program. Ongoing partnerships with cultural and community organizations have made "stars" of many of her pupils. Music, song, dance and storytelling are just some of the "arts" to which she has exposed her pupils. Ms. Graham has received the Young Audience Excellence in Partnership Award for her ongoing commitment to the "beauty of the dance".

Jody Imbimbo is the parent of two children, one with special needs, who currently attend New York City Public Schools and have benefited from participating in integrated arts programs. Jody is the Executive Director of Design and Development Resources for Education and the Arts, a non-profit organization whose mission is to advance educational innovation and social change by providing high quality research and technical assistance to educational organizations. She has over 20 years of experience as an educational researcher and program planner with a focus on New York City schools.



Jennifer Raine, D.M.A., has created and implemented music and theater programs in public schools since 1995. As Special Program Coordinator for the Manhattan New Music Project, she designed Communication and Socialization through the Arts (CASTA), which provides professional development to teachers working with students on the autism spectrum. Dr. Raine currently spearheads curriculum development and professional development workshops for CASTA and for other MNMP initiatives, including Blank Page to Stage and Setting the Stage for Success, which target English Language Learners and students with special needs. From 2002-2008, Dr. Raine served as the Head of Curriculum Development for MNMP's professional development partnerships with District 75. Since 1999, she has worked as a teaching artist for numerous organizations, including Marquis Studios, the Metropolitan Opera Guild, Midori and Friends, and Young Audiences NY. In addition to her extensive work within the New York City public school system, Dr. Raine conducts student and staff development workshops throughout North America and the world, both independently and as a staff member of the Metropolitan Opera Guild Education Department and the International Schools Theater Association. Workshops focus on facilitating creation of original student work across all arts disciplines, specifically drama, music, movement, visual arts and creative writing. Dr. Raine has worked with special education populations since 1999.

Susan Russo was teaching dance to a young man with cerebral palsy when she made the life-changing decision, at the age of 18, to bring the joy of movement and the excitement of creativity to young people of *every ability*. To follow that dream she obtained a BS in Dance Education from UNC-Greensboro and a Masters in Dance Education from Teacher's College at Columbia University. Having taught in both public and private venues for over 35 years, Ms Russo recently obtained another Masters in Special Education and dedicates her life's work to her four children, in particular her special angel, Theresa for whom the Theresa Foundation is named. In addition to the wonderful recreational opportunities provided by Theresa's Fun Place (a park and playground) at UCP-Nassau in Roosevelt, children have the opportunity to act, dance, sing and create their own art at TAPA, the *Theresa Academy of Performing Arts*. TAPA is open to the siblings, parents and caregivers of its students so that they may also participate in classes with loved ones who have special needs.

Moderator:

Lisa Dennett, Co-Chair, of the Arts in Special Education Consortium, is founder/director of Interactive Drama for Education and Awareness in the Schools (I.D.E.A.S.), which brings drama programs to youth with disabilities and other disadvantages. I.D.E.A.S. was established to reach populations that had less than equal access to appropriate creative outlets in school. Ms. Dennett, an actress with a BA in Theater performance, earned a specialized Masters degree in Drama for People with Disabilities from the Gallatin School at New York University where the first I.D.E.A.S. Sociodrama curriculum for youth with disabilities was created. She is passionate about process-centered drama and youth and proud to continue to do this work, both as a teaching artist and administrator. Ms. Dennett is also a nationally certified sign language interpreter and previously taught blind adults and youth for 16 years at the Lighthouse, and freelanced as a teaching artist.

The Arts and Related Service Providers

Related Service Providers are often not an ingredient in arts education offered students on the special education spectrum. This session is geared to provide a better understanding of this important community. Part panel discussion and part audience participation, it will explore entry points to and connections between the Arts and Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, Speech Therapists and Social Workers/counseling.

Panelists:

Lorraine Kransdorf is a bilingual social worker with the New York City Board of Education with over 17 years of experience working with blind and multi-handicapped children. She holds an MSW from the Columbia University School of Social Work, as well as multiple certifications in planning and school administration. She was a member of the Board of Lincoln Center's program for Children with Disabilities and has designed numerous programs to introduce blind children to various topics in art and culture. She is currently involved in developing several such programs, including one centered on the art and architecture of the United Nations, one on facial features and emotions and one on understanding African masks through tactile experience. Ms. Kransdorf is a strong believer in using art as a tool for working through the various emotional issues of the children she works with. In addition to being disabled, many of the children in Ms. Kransdorf population are the victims of abuse and most come from highly disadvantaged backgrounds. Therefore, Ms. Kransdorf's programs always seek to both educate and provide the children a means to express their own inner feelings, thereby deepening their understanding of both the arts and themselves. She currently works at multiple sites with students aged 5-14.

Jessica S. Maheshwari, PT, DPT has been a physical therapist for the NYC DOE for the past four years. She has worked in the regional school setting for one year, and with District 75 for the last three at P177@295 in Queens Village, New York. The population comprises of children in the 6:1:1 and 12:1:4 population, with various diagnoses of Autism, Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, Seizure Disorder, and multiple disabilities. As a physical therapist, the most important role she plays relating to the arts is to position the children appropriately to provide access to instruments during music, paintbrushes and crayons during art, and taking steps during dance practice. She also makes sure the students are using their proper equipment, such as standers, gait trainers, adaptive chairs, walkers, etc, while engaging in the various arts. Jessica graduated from New York Institute of Technology in 2004 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Life Science, and in 2006 with a Doctorate of Physical Therapy. She is an active member of the APTA, and also works part time in an orthopedic outpatient facility in Queens, as well provides services for children in their homes who do not get physical therapy in their school.

Martina Nunez-Rojas holds a Bachelor of Arts in speech-language pathology from Marymount Manhattan College, a Master of Arts in speech-language pathology from The City University of New York, and 30 credits above her Masters in early childhood education. She also holds an ancillary bilingual license from the City of New York. For the past 25 years Martina has been working in District 75 for the New York City Department of Education as a speech-language pathologist. During these years she has worked with children in special education who have been diagnosed as emotionally disturbed, multiply handicapped, on the autism spectrum, as well as children who are in general education with speech and language problems ranging in age from 5 years to 18 years. Currently,

she works with children who are classified with emotional disturbance and those on the autism spectrum, ranging from pre-school to 11 years. For many years Martina served as clinical supervisor of student teaching for various colleges and universities, working with their undergraduate and graduate students. Martina has participated, together with some of her students, in the NYC Very Special Arts Festival that takes place at Columbia University in the spring.

Jo Anna Padula, MS OTR/L, is an occupational therapist (OT), who currently services the students of PS371K, District 75. She is an avid lover of the arts, having participated in numerous musical productions from the stage of her high school musicals all the way to Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall. Jo Anna's involvement in the arts helped to ignite her passion for life and people. As an OT she focuses on helping individuals habilitate, rehabilitate and/or adapt to have meaningful and purposeful outcomes. She utilizes the arts each day with her 14-17 year old ASD and MR students, as she feels they create endless possibilities to foster and enhance all life skills.

Arts Presenter:

Joan Merwyn has been working creatively with special needs populations in New York City since 1983. As a movement and theater specialist, Joan conducts artist-in-residencies and professional development training seminars. Currently with Marquis Studios, Joan is a Master Teaching Artist for the Teaching Artists Training Institute (TATI), exposing professional teaching artists to the world of autism and mentoring them on how to approach residencies in the classroom. Through Manhattan New Music Project, she trains teachers of autistic students in a federally funded, multi-arts program, which emphasizes Communication and Socialization Through the Arts (CASTA). Joan served numerous special needs populations for 25 years through Hospital Audiences, Inc., where she was a Workshop Evaluator, Senior Teaching Artist and Mentor to workshop artists. Joan Merwyn has performed and taught internationally, in the field of physical theater. For more information, please go to www.JoanMerwyn.com.

Facilitators:

Lester Katz – teacher, supervising teacher, unit coordinator, assistant principal and principal – spent his entire career with the NYC DOE, the last 31 years in District 75. That career has been dedicated to the education of severely handicapped youngsters, focused on developing each student to his or her fullest potential and making the Arts available to them. He has three degrees from Queens College – a BA in Elementary Education, a BS in Special Education and a Professional Diploma in Educational Supervision and Administration. In addition, he has completed two Fellowships, one on Educational Policy (Institute for Educational Leadership, Washington, D.C.); the other at Harvard University on Educational Systems Change. He currently serves as a Field Consultant for NYC Teaching Fellows at Pace University. He retired in from the Queens School for Career Development in 2008. As a principal, he always had an “open door” policy and prided himself on developing and nurturing his staff as well as his students.

Ronnie Shuster, a former paraprofessional & classroom teacher, is principal of P94M, a K-8, public school serving students with autism, emotional disturbance and mental retardation. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Early Childhood and Elementary Education, a Master of Science in Special Education and a Professional Certificate in Supervision and Administration. She has spent her entire career in the field of special education.

ARTSⁱⁿ SPECIAL EDUCATION consortium

Ronnie firmly believes that her students should be viewed as special and not just special education. She is dedicated to developing a school that looks at every child individually and taps into "that one special thing" that drives their interest and helps them to understand that they can learn and be productive. She has a strong belief that all children can find this in the visual or performing arts. Dedicated to the arts for her pupils, her site – the only all special education school in NYC to receive a Shubert/Music Theater International Broadway Juniors Grant – is completely immersed in the work, ensuring that every child is involved in both visual & performing arts.

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We wish to extend our thanks and appreciation to the following organizations for their support and help.

Holly Berfield, Esq.

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Metropolitan Opera Guild

Museum of Arts and Design

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New York City Department of Education,
District 75, Clinical and Support Services

New York State Alliance for Arts Education

New York State Council on the Arts

PS 177Q, The Robin Sue Ward School For Exceptional Children

The Students at P721R@IS43/Hungerford School, District 75

Resources for Children with Special Needs

United Federation of Teachers, Special Education

Young Audiences of New York

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The Museum of Arts and Design collects, displays, and interprets objects that document contemporary and historic innovation in craft, art, and design. In its exhibitions and educational programs, the Museum celebrates the creative process through which materials are crafted into works that enhance contemporary life. The museum is wheelchair accessible.

